



## DON'T FALL DOWN ON SAFETY

A fall might not seem like the most serious kind of accident. Often, it is not. However, the Alaskan Region has numerous incidents of slips, trips, and falls that have cost the agency thousands of dollars and the worker untold grief. Here are just a sampling from 3900-6 forms:

"Slipped off the curb"	"Fell, landed on back/tailbone area"
"Wrenched back"	"Slipped on snow-covered ice"
"Slipped on ice"	"Slipped on snow in entry"
"Slipped on ice, bruised left hip and left ankle"	"Fell and broke right wrist after ladder slipped"

**Here are some ways to prevent this common but sometimes deadly kind of accident:**

- Keep pedestrian traffic areas free of obstacles and clutter. This can include scrap, trash, stored materials, tools and equipment.
- Don't store things on the floor. There should be adequate shelving or other storage space for materials, tools and equipment.
- Keep walking surfaces clean and dry. They should be free of water, ice, mud, oil and grease. Pay special attention to entryways.
- Areas where floors are being cleaned should be blocked off.
- Clean up any spills promptly, or barricade the area until it can be taken care of.
- Report any hazards on the surfaces for floors such as loose carpeting or tiles which are starting to lift.
- Avoid running cables and cords across traffic areas. If these must cross walkways, run them overhead or use conduits. As a last resort, make sure cords are taped down to reduce tripping hazards.
- Keep trash and scrap cleaned up and disposed of.
- Always close drawers promptly. Leaving a lower drawer open can cause a serious accident if someone stumbles over it.
- Use ladders safely. Choose the right ladder for the job and make sure it is set up properly on a firm surface. Don't stand on the top few rungs, and do not lean away from the ladder.
- Set up scaffolding safely. Use approved scaffold designs and use them correctly.
- When working at heights, use approved fall protection and fall arrest equipment. Maintain this equipment well and check it regularly for defects.
- Wear proper footwear to prevent falls. Shoe soles should be made of non-slip material. Shoes should have low heels, fit well and be kept fastened.
- Long, loose pant cuffs present a tripping hazard — don't wear them.
- Maintain adequate lighting. Report any problems such as burned out light fixtures or obstructed windows. This is especially important in hallways and stairwells.
- Don't jump down from elevated surfaces such as vehicles or loading docks. Take the stairway or ladder.
- Walk, don't run up or down stairs, and use the handrail.
- Never store items on the stairs, even temporarily.
- Make sure any floor openings are correctly covered and barricaded.
- Watch where you are going. Don't try to walk while reading something or carrying an object you can't see over.
- Don't walk backwards. Many tripping accidents occur when a person backs up and trips over something.
- Have your vision checked regularly and change your prescription eyewear as required.

*Check your work area and your work habits frequently to make sure you are doing all you can to prevent slips, trips and falls.*

***This important message brought to you by the ROSHM at AAL-471S.***

